

## BUSINESS, CONSUMER SERVICES, AND HOUSING AGENCY

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## CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD



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## RESPONSE STATEMENT

DECEMBER 23, 2021

The California Horse Racing Board is aware of a complaint filed by the California Veterinary Medical Board against Dr. Jeff Blea, who currently serves as the CHRB Equine Medical Director (EMD). The complaint focuses on his private veterinary practice prior to being named EMD effective July 1, 2021.

When the CHRB hired Dr. Blea in the spring, it was after an exhaustive search and based upon his extensive knowledge and service to the horse-racing industry. He is past president of the American Association of Equine Practitioners and is literally writing the federal regulations regarding medication control and anti-doping.

“We are surprised and disappointed that the Veterinary Medical Board would file a complaint during this time when the advice and counsel of our recently hired EMD is so crucial,” said CHRB Chairman Greg Ferraro. “The CHRB has accomplished incredible reforms in the last two years, but clearly more work is needed. We continue to work hard to reform the industry and make horse racing safe for all involved.”

“I have known and worked with Dr. Blea for more than 20 years, and during that time I have never met a veterinarian more committed to caring for horses,” said CHRB Executive Director Scott Chaney. “From my perspective, he has always displayed high ethical standards. In short, he has dedicated his life to the protection and promotion of animal welfare. I look forward to Dr. Blea continuing to serve the CHRB and the horse-racing industry during the due-process phase of this matter.”

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